

## Message Text

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ACTION CU-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-02 INR-10 /031 W  
-----105427 231717Z /43

P 231644Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7003  
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
USMISSION USBERLIN

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 02101

EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SCUL, GE  
SUBJECT: PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT OPENING

REF: BERLIN 1922

1. PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT OF PHOTOGRAPHY OPENED MARCH 22 AT BERLIN'S "ALTES MUSEUM" WITH OVER 200 GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE AT OFFICIAL CEREMONY. GDR GUESTS HEADED BY MFA'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DR. HORST GRUNERT, US AFFAIRS DIRECTOR DR. GEYER, CULTURAL SECTION CHIEF AMBASSADOR KURT MERKEL, LESSER MFA OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KULTURBUND, GDR MUSEUMS, THE CULTURAL WORLD, AND 40 PROMINENT GDR PHOTOGRAPHERS, PLUS MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

2. CEREMONIAL OPENING CONSISTED OF TWO SPEECHES, FIRST BY DR. GERHARD MERTINK, GENERAL SECRETARY OF KULTURBUND, WHO SPOKE OF STRAND'S HUMANISM AND IMPORTANCE TO PHOTOGRAPHY, HIS INTEREST IN SOCIAL PROGRESS AND PAST TIES TO GDR, AND FACT THAT TWO BOOKS BY HIM PUBLISHED IN LEIPZIG. US SIDE REPRESENTED BY AMBASSADOR BOLEN WHO ADDRESSED IMPORTANCE OF STRAND EXHIBIT AS FIRST US  
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CULTURAL EVENT SINCE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS SYMBOLIZING PROGRESS OF CULTURAL RELATIONS, AND IDENTIFIED AMERICAN CULTURAL EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR LATER THIS YEAR AND DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT, AS REPRESENTING BILATERAL EFFORTS ON BEHALF CROSS-COMMUNICATION, BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION.

3. TWO HOURS PRIOR TO OFFICIAL OPENING SPECIAL PREVIEW WAS HELD FOR PRESS, ATTENDED BY TWENTY-FIVE JOURNALISTS FROM GDR, NEW YORK TIMES, AP, REUTER, GDR-TV AND RADIO AND RIAS, SOME OF WHOM REMAINED FOR CEREMONIES.

4. TOUR OF EXHIBIT BY AMBASSADOR AND MRS. BOLEN AND GDR OFFICIALS WAS FOLLOWED BY KULTURBUND-HOSTED RECEPTION DURING WHICH BOTH EXHIBIT AND AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS WERE PRAISED TO PAO BY MERKEL, GEYER AND GRUNERT, LATTER REQUESTING COPY OF SPEECH "FOR OUR ARCHIVES."

5. RECEPTION AND OPENING WERE ESPECIALLY PRODUCTIVE FOR P&C OFFICERS WHO MADE NUMBER OF CONTACTS NOT ONLY FROM BERLIN BUT OTHER CITIES. ENTHUSIASM FOR EXHIBIT WAS FREQUENTLY COUPLED WITH REMARKS ABOUT NEED FOR CLOSER ASSOCIATION WITH EMBASSY'S OFFICERS AND FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING CHANNELS OF INFORMATION. INVITATIONS WERE LIBERALLY EXTENDED FOR GET-TOGETHERS IN LEIPZIG, DRESDEN AND OTHER CITIES. PLANS WERE DISCUSSED FOR FURTHER EXPLOITATION OF THE EXHIBIT, SUCH AS CULTURAL AND SCHOOL DELEGATIONS FROM MANY PARTS OF THE GDR, AND ONE KULTURBUND OFFICIAL SAID HE WANTED TO ARRANGE FOR A FILM-DOCUMENTARY ON THE EXHIBIT. DR. SCHADE, CURATOR OF THE "ALTES MUSEUM" EXPRESSED THE WISH TO HAVE A MAJOR EXHIBIT OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PAINTING, "ABOUT WHICH THERE IS AN ENORMOUS IGNORANCE IN OUR COUNTRY," ADDING QUICKLY HOWEVER THAT SUCH AN UNDERTAKING WOULD HAVE TO BE AGREED

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TO "AT OTHER LEVELS" BEFORE HE COULD BEGIN DISCUSSIONS.

6. THE SINGLE MOST ENTHUSIASTIC GDR GUEST WAS THE EDITOR OF "FOTOGRAFIE" THE GDR'S MONTHLY PHOTOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE, WHO IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE HAD ALREADY ANTICIPATED THE EXHIBIT WITH AN EXCELLENT ARTICLE ON STRAND. HE DESCRIBED THE UNITED STATES AS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO RECOGNIZE PHOTOGRAPHY AS AN ART-FORM, SINGLING OUT PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S WPA FOR PROVIDING PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH OPPORTUNITY, AND THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART IN NEW YORK FOR HAVING ESTABLISHED A SEPARATE DEPARTMENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHY. "ALL THE GREAT PHOTOGRAPHERS, FROM MATTHEW BRADY TO GORDON PARKS, ARE AMERICANS," HE SAID WITH GLASS RAISED HIGH. ANOTHER NOTEWORTHY COMMENT, WHICH NO ONE CONTRADICTED, WAS MADE BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE GDR LEAGUE FOR PEOPLES FRIENDSHIP, WHO CHARACTERIZED THE OCCASION AS "A MODEL EXHIBIT AND EVENT IN EVERY SENSE."

7. GDR RADIO CARRIED INTERVIEWS ON STRAND EXHIBIT LATER SAME AFTERNOON, WHILE GDR-TV IN ITS MAIN NEWSCAST COVERED OPENING SAME NIGHT. GDR PRESS ON MARCH 23 FEATURED TWO-COLUMN STORY ON STRAND EXHIBIT, WITH EXCERPTS

FROM AMBASSADOR'S AND MERTINK'S SPEECHES. STORY APPEARED  
PAGE TWO "NEUES DEUTSCHLAND," "BERLINER ZEITUNG" AND  
ORGANS OF OTHER PARTIES. MEANWHILE, LARGE POSTER  
DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT BERLIN, AND ON SALE AT MUSEUM.  
(COPIES OF POSTER, BROCHURE, INVITATION AND PRESS  
COVERAGE BEING POUCHED.)

8. EMBASSY ESPECIALLY GRATIFIED BY SEPARATE PANEL ON  
PHOTOGRAPHY PREPARED BY RPO VIENNA WHICH CONTAINS EIGHT

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7004  
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 BERLIN 02101

FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMERICAN ARTISTS WITH NOTICE OF  
STRAND EXHIBIT AT "ALTES MUSEUM." PANEL WAS REQUESTED  
OF RPO WHICH DESPITE OTHER PRIORITY WORK SATISFIED NEEDS  
THIS POST WITH EXCELLENT PRODUCT DELIVERED ONE WEEK EARLY.

9. LAST TWO WEEKS HAVE PROVEN TO BE UNPRECEDENTED IN  
US-GDR RELATIONS ESPECIALLY FROM VIEWPOINT AMERICAN  
PRESENCE. BEGINNING WITH LEIPZIG FAIR AND AMBASSADOR'S  
MEETING WITH HONECKER, VISIT OF US TRADE COUNCIL--FEATURED  
PAGE ONE IN GDR PRESS--"STAR WARS" AUDIENCE TURNOUT, PRESS  
AND TV COVERAGE OF SIGNING OF DRESDEN ART AGREEMENT, AND  
CLIMAXED BY STRAND EXHIBIT OPENING AND MEDIA COVERAGE,  
WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR BEING ON  
GDR-TV AND QUOTED IN PRESS TWICE IN TEN DAYS, UNITED  
STATES VERY MUCH IN PUBLIC EYE. BOLEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** EXHIBITS, PHOTOGRAPHY, CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS  
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Sheryl P. Walter  
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